

Washington, DC -- Today, U.S. Representative Michael A. Arcuri (D-Utica) renewed his support for a comprehensive agreement to settle issues surrounding the Oneida Indian Nation of New York's pending land into trust application. In a letter to Governor Eliot Spitzer, Oneida Indian Nation Representative Ray Halbritter, and Oneida County Executive Anthony Picente, Arcuri called for all parties to come together and develop a settlement plan that establishes a clear path forward, which protects the economy of Upstate New York while addressing the pressing concerns of all parties involved.

"The time for posturing is over and the time for real negotiations is now," Arcuri said. "As I have consistently said, Upstate New York relies on the economic growth driven by the Oneida Indian Nation and I do not want to see a loss of jobs in this region. We have the opportunity to work together and move forward to develop a solution that uniquely benefits our area."

A copy of Arcuri's letter is attached below:

March 22, 2007

Governor Eliot Spitzer
New York State
Executive Chamber
Albany, NY 12224

Nation Representative Ray Halbritter
Oneida Indian Nation
Box 1
Vernon, NY 13476

County Executive Anthony Picente, Jr.
Oneida County Office Building
800 Park Avenue
Utica, New York 13501

Dear Sirs,

I write today to urge renewed negotiations between the Oneida Indian Nation of New York, the State of New York, and Oneida County. The complexity of the issues facing these parties – the land-into-trust application, the gaming compact, regulatory and taxation issues, and even the involvement of other parties – demands a comprehensive agreement that establishes a clear path forward, rather than the status quo of addressing issues in a piecemeal fashion at different levels.

In light of the recent decision by the U.S. Department of Interior to review its decision approving the 1993 compact between the Oneida Indian Nation of New York and the State of New York unless the parties enter into negotiations for a new compact before April 30th, it is imperative that the parties resume formalized discussions aimed at resolving these outstanding issues. I am emboldened by the knowledge that all parties involved share the common goal of protecting and strengthening the economy of Upstate New York. For this reason, I believe a mutually agreeable outcome is achievable.

As I have consistently said, Upstate New York relies on the economic growth driven by Oneida Indian Nation and I do not want to see a loss of jobs in this region. It appears that, due to the Department of Interior's recent communication, the only option to prevent disruption of livelihood is to resume negotiations among the appropriate parties. The time for posturing is over and the time for real negotiations is now. We have the opportunity to work together and move forward to develop a solution that uniquely benefits our area.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. ARCURI
Member of Congress

Cc: Assemblywoman RoAnn Destito
Assemblyman David Townsend
State Senator Joe Griffo
State Senator David Valesky
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Hilary Clinton
Assistant Secretary Jim Cason, Department of Interior

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